



CANINE EXERCISE AND GROOMING

EXERCISE AND PLAY

Dogs need exercise, and the more active the breed, the more exercise is required. A short walk twice a day is preferable to one long walk, particularly for large breeds, as they may not be built for endurance. The change of scenery is almost as important as the exercise for many modern yard or house confined pets!

Dog's bones and joints are still developing and susceptible to stress, injury and growth problems until they reach 9-12 months of age for small breeds and 18-24 months of age for the larger breeds. Extreme exercise in this growth period can permanently damage a pet's bones and joints so everything in moderation is always a good idea!

Good guidelines are to avoid trauma and injury from jumping down large heights, trying to jump up very high and repetitive and strenuous negotiation of steps and obstacles. Just because dogs want to and can run for hours on end, doesn't mean that it is not causing them damage, especially in the heat of the day! So once, your dog starts to get tired or appears out of breath, it is time to stop the game!

BATHING AND GROOMING

Healthy coat and skin requires balanced premium nutrition and regular grooming.

By teaching your pet to sit or stand and be groomed with a soft brush for a short period makes it easier once they become adults. This is also a good way to get to know your pet's overall body condition, so any changes can be detected and checked, such as lumps, ticks and skin problems. Regular grooming not only includes brushing their coats, but checking and cleaning ears and eyes, brushing and checking teeth, clipping nails and bathing.

The frequency of bathing depends on your pet's age, activity and whether they are indoor or outdoor pets. It also varies with your pet's skin and coat type, so they are all individuals! It is usually not necessary to bathe more frequently than every two weeks and many pets go longer without their coats becoming unkempt or oily. If your pet has a skin problem or likes to roll in materials that are undesirable to be carried into the house, then more frequent washing may be necessary.

Bathing can wash the normal oils out of the skin and coat, so if your pet's skin is becoming dry or scaly or the coat coarse and fragile, then you may be washing too frequently. If you wish to wash more than every two weeks, this is fine, so long as the skin and coat remain healthy.

Dog's skin is very different to our own, requiring different nutrients and maintaining at a different pH. Many human shampoos are therefore unsuitable, so stick to a product specially formulated for dogs, particularly the ones that contain no soap. Dermcare's Natural Shampoo with coconut oil or Aloveen with colloidal oatmeal and aloe vera are excellent examples.

If your pet shows any signs of irritated, red or itchy skin, it is always best to seek veterinary advice before using any products as secondary infections may need to be treated and the cause of the problem found.

Don't wash your pet before bringing it to the veterinarian for skin problems as this often washes away the evidence which identifies the problem. Medicated shampoos such as Malaseb are often excellent at getting on top of the problem and controlling it in the future.

